United Nations A/67/826

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 April 2013

Original: English

Sixty-seventh session
Agenda item 65 (a)
Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Letter dated 4 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey information on the State policy of Uzbekistan on ensuring and protecting the rights of children (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 65 (a).

(*Signed*) Dilyor **Khakimov**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan

13-28413 (E) 100413 100413

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 4 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Children's well-being: a State policy priority for Uzbekistan

The State policy of Uzbekistan for ensuring and protecting the rights of children operates within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, international obligations and programme strategy documents including the National Plan of Action to uphold the rights and interests of children.

A wide range of children's and young people's rights is enshrined in the Constitution of Uzbekistan; such rights are also included in and guaranteed by the Civil Code (1995) and the Family Code (1998). The fundamental rights of children, and the defence of those rights, have been developed in more than 10 acts, 30 Presidential decrees and decisions; approximately 40 Cabinet of Ministers decisions and 30 departmental legal and regulatory instruments.

The following State institutions have been established and placed in operation to defend children's rights:

(a) A network to uphold the rights of the family, motherhood and children, operating within the government and headed by the Deputy Prime Minister; it coordinates the activities of State governmental and administrative bodies in matters of implementing the children's rights guaranteed by the Constitution;

(b) A special commission attached to the Cabinet of Ministers deals with matters connected with minors. It is headed by the Attorney-General, whose remit includes matters of children's position in society, including monitoring the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour;

(c) The Presidential Decision on measures for raising effectiveness in preventing human trafficking established an Inter-Agency Commission against Human Trafficking, which includes the senior officials of ministries and departments. Similar commissions were established at province and district level;

(d) The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection structure includes State labour-legislation and labour-protection inspectorates which carry out official monitoring of the prohibition of violations of young people's labour rights.

A vital element of State social policy is the establishment of an environment conducive to the holistic physical and spiritual development and educational and professional improvement of the emerging generation.

Particular attention is focused on the successful employment of graduates of vocational secondary schools. The outcome of discussions between these schools and businesses on work experience for future graduates, with the prospect of subsequent recruitment, has been put into practice.

In the recent past, Uzbekistan has been investing approximately 12 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product in education every year. For the period between 2011 and 2016, over UZS 277 billion has been allocated to implement an infrastructure

modernization programme for higher-education institutions and major improvements in the training of specialists.

Non-governmental, non-profit organizations and civil-society institutions make a significant contribution to implementing the right of young people to education and development.

In this connection, the Forum for the Culture and Art of Uzbekistan is conducting a programme to develop and establish a national model for continuing inclusive education in Uzbekistan. It includes development of a national model of inclusive education for pre-school and junior school stages of education, through the establishment of mixed groups piloted in schools and kindergartens.

The international community has recognized Uzbekistan's education system reform, which provides for 12 years of compulsory education, as a powerful instrument against child labour.

In 2008, the Parliament of Uzbekistan ratified two extremely important International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions: Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

A Government Decision of 12 September 2008 adopted the National Plan of Action for the implementation of those ILO Conventions, containing specific deadlines for compliance; on 26 March 2012, a plan of additional measures for 2012-2013 was adopted.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has been given responsibility for coordinating the action of State authorities, economic authorities, local-level State authorities and other bodies to ensure implementation of the commitments in the plans of action.

On 25 March 2011, an Inter-Agency Working Group was established to prepare and present information on the implementation of ILO Conventions ratified by Uzbekistan, as ILO is the body responsible for preventing violations of labour law by employers and workers. In keeping with the ILO principle of tripartite involvement, the Working Group is founded on trilateral representation of Government, employers and workers, and includes officials of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federation of Trade Unions, the Farmers' Association, the National Centre for Human Rights, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Higher and Special Secondary Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Women's Committee and the Kamolot public youth movement.

On 27 June 2012, the Farmers' Association, the Women's Committee and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection adopted a joint decision on local awareness-raising campaigns for farmers and seminars for farming enterprises regarding compliance with ILO conventions and recommendations. These seminars were conducted in August 2012 in all parts of the country.

On 24 August 2012, at a meeting of the Special Working Group for information and awareness-raising about the ban on involving students in general

education schools in the cotton harvest, the composition of local working groups was approved and the necessary instructions were issued.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Health issued a decision adopting Requirements on the Prohibition of Use of Minors' Labour, which is in line with ILO documents on banning and eliminating the worst forms of child labour.

A review has taken place of the list of tasks performed in hazardous conditions, which places a ban on employment of those under 18 to perform over 2,000 hazardous jobs; such jobs cannot be given to minors. Limits were established for the maximum weight which those under 18 could lift or carry.

By a Decision of 29 June 2009 on the development and expansion of family business and handicraft activities, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted regulations on those activities, specifying the conditions for the involvement of minors, taking into account the requirements of the Conventions.

As part of the implementation of the Plan of Action, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Health established a special working group and adopted a programme for local monitoring of the ban on forcing students in general education schools to take part in the cotton harvest. The following are involved in the monitoring process: the Office of the Attorney-General, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of National Education, the Centre for specialized secondary and vocational education, the Council of the Federation of Trade Unions, the Kamolot public youth movement, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and local-level State authorities.

In August 2012, the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan issued a decree prohibiting the use of child labour during the cotton harvest. A Government directive banning the involvement of schoolchildren in the cotton harvest was distributed to all schools, via regional education departments. The Office of the Attorney-General was made responsible for monitoring compliance with these rules.

On 2 May 2011, the Council of the Federation of Trade Unions, the Farmers' Association and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection adopted a joint declaration banning the use of forced child labour in farming.

Since 2008, all of Uzbekistan has been covered by a child labour hotline facility which can be used at any time by parents and children in cases of rights violations.

The forcing of children into work, by whomever committed, and in whatever form, including threatening retaliation against children or their parents, is prohibited and is prosecuted in accordance with the law in Uzbekistan.

In the interests of making economic entities and individuals more accountable for violations of the requirement to ban the use of minors in work, an Act on additions to the Administrative Liability Code of Uzbekistan to improve the legislation protecting the rights of minors was adopted on 21 December 2009. As a consequence, the legislation provides for increased accountability of officials for violations of labour law in connection with those aged under 18, and increased accountability of individuals for violating the ban on labour undertaken by minors.